



## OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich  
County Executive

Tiffany Ward  
Director and Chief Equity Officer

### MEMORANDUM

November 1, 2023

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director  
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #24-25  
Traffic Signals Devices and Automated Enforcement Plan on racial disparities and  
inequities in traffic safety

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that the effect of *Supplemental Appropriation #24-25 Traffic Signals Devices and Automated Enforcement Plan on racial disparities and inequities in traffic safety* is inconclusive. While this supplemental appropriation will likely create universal benefits, it is unclear—based on available information—how much it will reduce racial disparities and inequities in traffic safety.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #24-25 is to allocate \$1,606,000 for the implementation of Bill 11-23, “Safe Streets Act of 2023”. The allocation will be used to fund:
  - Non-motorist crash reviews in Montgomery County Public Schools Walksheds and School Zones (beginning in January 2024)
  - Installation of No-Turn-On-Red (NTOR) and Lead Pedestrian Interval (LPI) signals

According to available information, the allocation will allow the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to implement the Bill’s requirements while ensuring it meets existing commitments in the Vision Zero 2030 Action Plan.

ORESJ has conducted REIAs on supplemental appropriations related to Vision Zero, transportation safety, and likely impacts on racial disparities and inequities. Most recently,

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ORESJ's REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #24-4 Good Hope Road Shared Use Path Project (CIP No. 501902) explained how structural racism in planning, housing, and transportation policies has shaped current racial disparities in roadway safety<sup>1</sup>. That REIA lifted evidence similar to what the Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) shared in its Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement (RESJIS)<sup>2</sup> on Bill 11-23 MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC – TRAFFIC SIGNALS, DEVICES, AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION PLAN. The RESJIS described the intersection of Vision Zero and racial equity and referenced previous OLO analyses<sup>3</sup>, which document inequities in transportation infrastructure, disparities in traffic injuries, and data suggesting that White residents are disproportionate beneficiaries of road-related transportation projects in the FY23 CIP.

The totality of OLO's analyses found that "the racial equity and social justice (RESJ) impact of Bill 11-23 is indeterminant" based in part on a lack of clarity around the extent to which BIPOC residents will be the primary beneficiaries of the proposed traffic safety investments outlined in the bill. Because Supplemental Appropriation #24-25 funds preliminary implementation of Bill 11-23, "Safe Streets Act of 2023", OLO's RESJIS finding is especially pertinent to considering the extent to which supplemental appropriation #24-25 is likely to advance racial equity and social justice.

Given that this supplemental appropriation focuses on Vision Zero goals, which aim to create a universal benefit in the community, ORESJ assessed the proposed activities using a targeted universalist approach, "in which universal goals are established for all groups concerned; however, the strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted, based on how different groups are situated within structures, culture, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal"<sup>4</sup>. Based on that approach, the targeting involved with the MCPS walkshed review may be considered a strength, given that students in school settings are differently situated than those in the general public. Similarly, approaches that target geographies with No-Turn-On-Red (NTOR) and Lead Pedestrian Interval (LPI) signals also help to hone in on areas of greatest vulnerability; however, an absence of pertinent prioritization details and attention to the ways race, age, and disability affect outcomes may weaken this supplemental appropriation's likely impact on racial disparities and inequities in the county.

ORESJ's analysis of supplemental appropriation #24-25 has generated the following questions, the answers to which could help clarify the extent to which the allocations can help to reduce racial disparities and other inequities in traffic injuries and deaths.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/24-4.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/resjis/2023/Bill11-23.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> In August 2022, OLO published a RESJIS for Bill 24-22, Streets and Roads. RESJIS for Bill 24-22, Office of Legislative Oversight, August 22, 2022. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/resjis/2022/Bill24-22.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism>

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- Non-motorist crash reviews in Montgomery County Public Schools Walksheds and School Zones (beginning in January 2024)
  - Question: What are the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of individuals struck while walking/biking in a designated MCPS walk zone?
  - Question: What is the distribution of walking/biking crashes across the County? Are certain districts or geographies disproportionately impacted?
  - Question: How will Infrastructure Reviews be utilized, and by whom?
  - Question: In what ways will school communities be engaged to ensure communication about review findings and steps for corrective action?
  - Question: How will review findings be incorporated into CIP and/or other resource requests?
- Installation of No-Turn-On-Red (NTOR) and Lead Pedestrian Interval (LPI) signals
  - How will the location of the NTOR and LPI signals be selected? What are the criteria and prioritization approach?
  - How will impacted community members (BIPOC residents, people with disabilities, and seniors) be engaged in site selection?
  - How does the installation of signage and signals address goals and needs identified by the Commission on People with Disabilities<sup>5</sup>? Similarly, how will lessons learned from the Montgomery County Study on Pedestrian Navigation for the Visually Impaired in Urban Centers be incorporated<sup>6</sup> into design plans and site selection?
  - How will outcomes associated with the signs and signals be tracked and evaluated?

cc: Dr. Earl Stoddard, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive  
Christopher Conklin, Director, Department of Transportation  
Maricela Cordova, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Transportation  
Michael Paylor, Section Chief, Department of Transportation  
Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator, Office of the County Executive  
Ken Hartman, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/CPWD2023AnnualReport.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Montgomery County Study on Pedestrian Navigation for the Visually Impaired in Urban Centers.  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT/Projects/TLCVision/>